

A T R U E
P O R T R A I T
O F T H E
E * * * * * N * * * * *,
D R A W N B Y
M_____n C A V A L I E R.

To which is added,

A SKETCH of some GREAT ALTERATIONS.

As for my People, Children are their Oppressors, and Women rule over them,
Isaiah, iii. 12.

They are a Nation void of Council, neither is there any Understanding in them,
Deut. xxxii. 28.

And thou shalt become an Astonishment, a Proverb and a By-word among all
Nations, Duet. xxviii. 37.

L O N D O N:

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T R A S T A O P

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ILLUSTRATION

SINGAPORE AND NEIGHBOURING PORTS

COLLECTED FROM

SINGAPORE AND THE COASTS OF INDIA AND

THE MELANESIAN ISLANDS

WITH NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

[Large size paper]

A TRUE PORTRAIT of the E— N—, drawn
by M—n C A V A L I E R.

GOOD SIR,

I Will now comply with your Request, and give as circumstantial an Account of the Alterations in our Island, since it has been in the Possession of the French, as the few Observations I have made will admit of, and this I shall do with the strictest Regard to Impartiality. And first, I will give a small Sketch of our late Masters; when Mr. K— was Governor, the Gentleness of his Administration gave us a very favourable Opinion of the E **; his Troops observed an exact Discipline, they were severely punished upon the least Complaint of Misbehaviour to the Islanders, and to keep them from Idleness, they were constantly employed in widening and reparing the Roads, or clearing of Ground. But after this Gentleman's Decease, we had no great Cause to boast; the Troops soon became indolent and insolent, insomuch that a poor Native dare not make Complaint for fear of having his Brains knocked out, by the Comrades of him or them who did the Injury; the petty Officers have gone so far, as to threaten them with corporal Punishment for presuming to complain: Perhaps you will say the petty Officers were not proper Persons to apply too for Redress; this I grant, but our Access to the Governor was only to be gained by their Leave; it was a constant Practice with them to enquire our Busines, which they were no sooner acquainted with, than they usurped the Magisterial Authority themselves, telling us, the Governor was busy; that if he came to the Knowledge of our Complaint, he would certainly punish us; and this they have often done without making the least Inquiry into the Merits of the Cause, by which Means the * Governors have been deceived in three Things, viz. The Behaviour of their Army, the Conduct of the Officers about their Persons, and the Disposition of the Minds of the People towards them; perhaps there is not a greater Solecism in Government, than a Supream's suffering him-

* I am persuaded, our late Genl G—l B—y would have redressed our Grievances, if his People had permitted us to lay them before him.

self to be difficult of Access : Yet, notwithstanding this glaring Mismanagement, I have heard these People speak with Raptures of the Excellency of their Laws, from which I have concluded; that either they must be mistaken, or the World is but miserably ruled. If the Nation in general resemble those I have conversed with, they are a vain, self-opiniated, empty People, priding themselves in the Possession of many good Qualities, to which they are entire Strangers : This Character may appear too severe at first Sight, as the Annals of *Europe* give us a different Idea of them, but there you only read what they have been formerly, not what they are at present, they are degenerated within these few Years from a brave, to a trifling insignificant People ; and this is easily accounted for. Those who have the Reins of Government in their Hands, indulge in all manner of Vice, such as Gaming, Drinking, &c. and when this is practised among the Great, the common People think they have a very good Excuse for doing the same ; upon the whole it appears to me very plain, no Nation ever was in greater want of a proper System in the practical Part of Governing than theirs ; their Laws stand for Cyphers, whilst the Makers of them, which I think they call the *****¹⁰⁰*, and the Magistrates, whose Business is to put them in Execution, will use various Methods to evade and break them when it clashes with their private Interests ; and certainly, if their Law-makers and Magistrates in general know better or more of the Theory of Governing than those of other Nations, and act worse, they deserve to be treated with the greater Contempt : Would it not provoke one, to hear these People abuse the *French* in a most scurrilous Manner, accusing them of Treachery, and every Thing which their Malice can invent, for exerting themselves in the Practice of what may render them Great and Opulent ; all Europe thinks them their Superiors now ; Have they not a better System of Politicks ? Their Success says yes : Is not their Trade increasing, whilst the *English* are dwindling into a State of Indolence ? They boast of what they have been, looking backward, whilst the *French* are pushing forward, and pleasing themselves with what they will be. What Benefit can a Man receive by thinking he was once in Power, he once possessed Wealth, if his present State is indigent ? It is certainly more commendable to make his unhappy Situation a sufficient Motive for pushing forward, and trying every

every laudable Method which may retrieve his Circumstances; they will say the *French* do not act upon honourable Terms: To this I answer, the very Proceedings which they contemn would, if practised by themselves, receive the Appellations of Wisdom, Bravery, &c. Not many Years ago they had an A——l, who invited a *Spanish* Commander on Board his Ship, entertained him in a friendly Manner, and in a few Minutes after his Return fell upon his whole Fleet, quite unprepared for an Engagement, and demolished the greatest Part of it; this Action, tho' to the last Degree base and treacherous, met with the highest Encomiums, and the worthy A——l was Ennobled.

I am told they have the privilege of electing or chusing their own Law-makers; notwithstanding which, the Man, whose Character, both in public and private Life is bad, stands as good a Chance of being elected into this Office, provided he has Wealth, as a Person who in all his Actions has approved himself a stanch Friend and Well-wisher to his Country; nay, the latter has frequently been turned out to make room for the former; and this, if there are no Deaths, they have the Privilege of doing every seven Years all over the Kingdom: But further, these People who are remarkably jealous of the least Infringement of their Liberties, may be, and are generally won ever to that Candidate, who will give them Leave to get Drunk at his Expence. If a Man behaves with the greatest Integrity for a Series of Years in the Service of his Country, and happens to omit the most trifling Custom, such as a Treat, an Entertainment, or the like; all his real Services are instantly forgot, his Electors determine to reject him the first Opportunity, and a Person who perhaps neither values them nor his County, but would sell both for a Trifle, is chose in his room. A strict Scrutiny into the Merits of a Candidate is hardly ever heard of; they are fond of the Shadow of Liberty, and in pursuing that lose the Substance; they mistake Phantoms for Realities; let them have the chusing their Representatives and all is well: They never enquire into the Causes or future Effect of Bribery, they have lost the Art of Discerning; if you load them with Slavery, give it but the Name of Liberty, and they will fall prostrate to receive the Fetters: On the Contrary, tho' they enjoy all manner of Freedom, tell them their Liberty is in Danger, and

they will fly into great Indecencies against the Legislature before they know the Nature of their Wrongs. The mentioning Bribery brings to my Mind the following, which was related to me by one of their Countrymen: Some Time since there was by Death a Vacancy in the Law-makers Assembly, for which there was two Candidates; one of them sent * two Pieces of Gold, called Guineas, to a Poor Man who dwelt in the Metropolis (which was two Days Journey from the Place of Election) for his Vote, and paid his travelling Expences besides; the Consequence of which was, the poor Wretch, elevated with the Possession of so much Wealth, drank to Excess and died before he reached his Habitation. So that this Man sold his Vote for Gold, because it would enable him to satisfy a beastly Appetite; they bellow out for Liberty, as the greatest Blessing they can enjoy, and yet part with it for a most trifling and insignificant Consideration.

I have been told, that an Election has cost a Candidate seven or eight hundred Pounds; how the Nation can expect their Interest will be consulted by such an Assembly I can't conceive; they buy the People, and they have an undoubted Right to sell them. I dare say, these Monopolisers of English Liberty lay out their Money to great Advantage, for the public Coffers are always open to such Members as are Opposers of the Ministerial Schemes; and to fill these Coffers the People are by heavy Taxes miserably impoverished, but some particular Persons are immeasurably enrich'd.

As for their —, he pleases the weaker Sort of People well enough, but those who have the Art of discerning despise him as a —: They say he is a Man of no Resolution, that he is of a fickle, unsettled Disposition; that those who are his Favourites one Month, are often Objects of his Contempt the next; that he takes no Notice of Merit, that he is afraid to act in the most trifling and insignificant Affairs, without the Consent of a Parcel of Place Men, who are continually hovering about his Person; that he never contributes any Thing to the Support of the W—s, tho' his private C—s are full; that he never did a public-spirited Action in his Life, tho' he has had more Opportunities than his Predecessors, by having greater S—s granted than ever was known before. But all in general give him the Character of an honest

* Six Guineas has been given for a Vote.

Man. To conclude, the present Behaviour of both — and ~~People~~ seems to indicate a total Cessation of all those valuable Qualities which rendered them once a respectable and happy Nation.

But I shall leave this Subject and come to that intended, which was a particular Account of the Alterations made in this Island since it has been in the Possession of the French. About six Weeks after the English Garrison embark'd, our new Masters took an exact Survey of the Harbors, Castle of St. Phillips, and the Island in general: A considerable Number of the Poor were immediately taken into Pay, at so much *per Day*, as long as they pleased to work, in repairing the Damages done to the Out-works by the Siege, which is now compleat, and several new Additions and Alterations are making. There was formerly a Wall round this Fortres, which has been neglected many Years; in several Places it is divided by Buildings, that have extended a considerable Way into the Suburbs, but a great Part of these Buildings will be thrown down and the Wall repaired; the Courts of Justice will be removed to * *Ciudadella*. The Palace of the late Governors, which is a wide irregular Building, is turning into a Barrack, and a more commodious one is building. At the Foot of the Hill, on which *Maison* is erected, they have begun a Dry-dock; this was much wanted, as heaving-down, the Method hitherto used, was attended with great Trouble, and proved prejudicial to the Ships: To execute this Work they have brought over several Hands from *Toulon*; we always thought it impracticable, but are already convinced of our Mistake; they have just begun to raise two additional Bastions, which are to project further than the old ones. The Ditch that surrounds the whole is to be deepen'd, and the Stone which will come from thence is to be employ'd in the additional Out-works already mentioned. There are a considerable Number of large Cannon added to those mounted towards the Harbour's Mouth. *Charles* Fort, which stands S. E. of the Castle, and has been neglected many Years, will be entirely levelled, and a new one built upon a different Plan. They have also begun to destroy some new Works, erected between the Queen's Redout and the Harbour, because they are quite useless: The English could not put above seven or eight hundred Men on Duty at once; whereas the French will, by these Alterations and Additions, find

* *Ciudadella* was formerly the capital City of this Island.

full Employment for at least twelve Hundred. They have now upwards of four thousand Men here, and those are to be reinforced with five Hundred more, which is to be their standing Force, add to these two thousand Natives in the *Termino* of *Mabon*, who have declared they will take up Arms in the Defence of their present Masters. This Place will in a few Years be quite inaccessible, it is impossible for you to form an Idea of the Improvements they have made without you were upon the Spot. Would not one conclude the *E——* was infatuated, to keep no more than two thousand five hundred Men, in a Place of such unspeakable Use to them; when the *F——b*, to whom it cannot be half so serviceable or important (as *Toulon* is so near) have almost doubled the Number.

It is necessary to inform you why the Natives are so suddenly attach'd to the *F——b*. At St. *Puig*, in the *Termino* of *Alaior*, there is a Lead Mine, which has been long neglected for want of Encouragement and proper Workmen; a ~~French~~ Officer, whose Knowledge in Mining is very extensive, has taken great Pains to instruct those who have a Property in it, by which Means it is rendered advantageous to them, and useful to the Island: Tho' at present we find Quarters for Part of the Troops; we shall, when the intended Barracks are finished, get rid of this Burthen; we used to find the *E——* in Oyl and Wood, but we are now paid for every Necessary at a fair settled Price. The Jurats, who are our civil Magistrates, have for many Years imposed heavy and unreasonable Taxes upon us; but by complaining to our present Governor, an Inquiry was immediately made into the Cause and Manner of levying those Taxes, and the Uses to which the Money was applied; by this Means great Impositions were discovered, the Jurats were reprimanded, and many of the Taxes lessened. We have been much censured for neglecting several Branches of Trade and Commerce, which might, if properly prosecuted, turn to our Advantage, by keeping Money at Home, now annually expend in the Importation of many Commodities, that may be as well manufactured here; we have indeed lived in a State of Indolence and Extravagance, unknown before the *E——* came amongst us, but we begin now to open our Eyes, the Activity and Industrie of the *F——b*, has enabled us to see ourselves in a proper Light.

Ciudadella,

April 3, 1757.

I am sincerely yours.